



Meeting Minutes  
**October 4, 2006**  
The Pyle Center  
Madison, WI

**Association members present:** Beth Norris, Dave Wilson, Francisco Sanchez, Cheryl Welch, Brad Grant, Jim Golembeski, Sally Cutler, Erhard Huettl, Steve Terry, LeRoy Forslund, Dan Racette, Dick Best, Paul Gordon, Colleen Bates, Jerry Hanoski, James Ehram, Pat Schramm, Steve Lewis, Howard Zellmer, Bob Borremans, Scott Stocker

**Also present:** Roberta Gassman, JoAnna Richard, Ron Hunt, Bill Clingan, Gary Denis, Sue Gleason, Dianne Reynolds, Jen Meyer, Mari Kay-Nabozny, Jason Walsh, Teresa Barch

### **Business Meeting**

1. Francisco Sanchez called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m.
2. Association members and guests briefly introduced themselves.
3. Francisco Sanchez outlined the proposed changes to the organizational structure of WWDA. Discussion took place regarding the need to: effectively share information across the 11 workforce development boards; actively engage the full 33-member association and restore the policy responsibility of the board chairs and local elected officials; and strengthen the connection to the Council on Workforce Investment and other groups with a similar mission.
4. A copy of the proposed revised bylaws and a summary of the proposed changes were included with the agenda packet. A vote on the proposed changes to the bylaws did not take place. Instead, a motion was made by Cheryl Welch to convene another meeting of the Wisconsin Workforce Development Association in early 2007 to discuss locally identified issues, engage in strategic planning, and revisit the organizational structure issue. The motion was seconded by Bob Borremans and unanimously approved.

### **Issue Forum**

A list of topics for the dialogue with Secretary Gassman later in the agenda was reviewed. Key discussion points included: the need to improve coordination between WWDA, the Council on Workforce Investment and the Department of Workforce Development; how the workforce development boards can have more input into the use of the state's 10 percent WIA set-aside funds; and how to improve the system by sharing best practices throughout the state. It was agreed that each workforce development board would include, in its next agenda, a discussion of the critical

issues that are facing Wisconsin's workforce development system. A compilation of these issues will be brought to the strategic planning session that will take place in early 2007.

**Remarks: Secretary Roberta Gassman, Department of Workforce Development**

Secretary Gassman's remarks touched upon the Governor's efforts to reduce the state's budget deficit, grow the economy, and invest in children. She offered positive trends in job growth, median income, and exports, as well as a lower unemployment rate, as evidence of the state's economic health. Initiatives of the current administration include:

- Investing in high-value employers through Workforce Advancement Grants
- GROW grants and other programs aimed at producing qualified workers for quality jobs
- A commitment to post-secondary education for today's eighth-graders through the Wisconsin Covenant
- A tax credit for child care

**Dialogue with Secretary Gassman**

Secretary Gassman addressed the following issues:

1. WIA set-aside funds: The 10 percent WIA state set-aside funds give the governor the flexibility to address critical workforce issues. Workforce Development Boards have been the beneficiaries of these funds through the GROW grants and other grants to boards for specific local purposes. Secretary Gassman invited the boards to approach the state with ideas for utilizing these funds in the future.
2. Governor Doyle will respond to the recommendations developed by the CWI Workforce Development Committee. Recommendations that would involve multi-agency policy changes are being discussed at State Interagency Team meetings. This team meets bi-monthly and is comprised of top-level representatives from the Governor's Office, University of Wisconsin System, Wisconsin Technical College System, Department of Commerce, Department of Workforce Development, Department of Public Instruction, the Center of Wisconsin Strategy, and the Council of Workforce Investment.
3. While other states have merged their commerce and workforce development departments, there is little interest in following that path in Wisconsin due to the large number of programs that are run by the Department of Workforce Development. However, these two departments are working closer than ever and are open to ideas for better alignment.
4. The Department of Workforce Development realizes that local areas must tap into other revenue streams in order to ensure their survival. Examples of assistance that the department could provide include writing letters of support and helping to make connections with other possible resources (e.g. local government entities, foundations).

5. Regarding the future of Wisconsin's workforce development boards, the state is not advancing an agenda to consolidate local areas; rather, it is dedicated to increasing efficiency through improved collaboration.

In addition, the Secretary offered the following suggestions for strengthening the relationship between the local workforce development boards and the Department of Workforce Development:

- Hold regular meetings between the Secretary and board representatives
- Appoint a workforce development board director to the Council on Workforce Investment
- Monthly or bi-monthly newsletter updates from state staff
- Attendance at WWDA meetings by local program liaisons
- Create ad hoc committees to act as sounding boards during policy development

#### **Presentation: The Workforce Alliance**

Jason Walsh, State Policy Director for The Workforce Alliance, gave a presentation entitled, "Federal Budget and Policy Update & An Example of State Organizing and Advocacy from California." The Workforce Alliance (TWA) is a national coalition of community-based organizations, community colleges, unions, business leaders and local officials advocating for public policies that invest in the skills of America's workers, so they can better support their families and help American businesses better compete in today's economy.

Key points included:

- Update on the FY07 Labor-Health and Human Services-Education Appropriations Subcommittee Bills and WIA reauthorization—neither has been consolidated into a single bill at this point, and further action is unlikely until after the November elections.
- Update on other workforce-related programs—Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF or W-2 in Wisconsin) was reauthorized in the Deficit Reduction Act through 2010. Reauthorization of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act is due in 2007. Seven bills have been introduced in the Senate and one major bill in the House.
- California's EDGE Campaign—a coalition sponsored by a wide range of public and private entities has crafted a unified policy agenda and is working to hold the governor and state legislature accountable for workforce development issues.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m. (motion – Colleen Bates; second – Brad Grant)

Submitted by Teresa Barch, WAJTE/WWDA Coordinator